PZ
7
.W247C
FT MEADE
GenColl

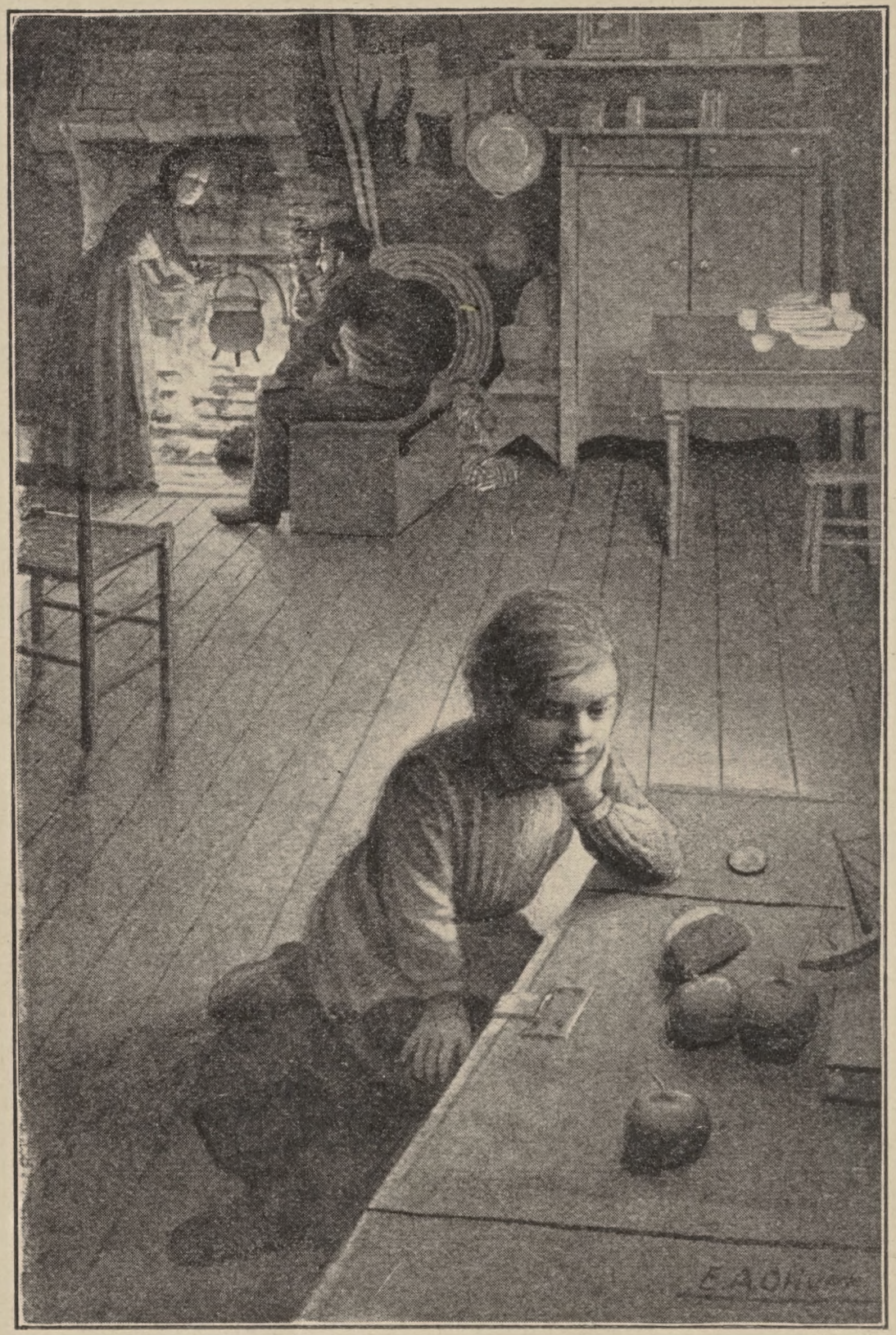
THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

Class PZ7

Book .W247C.

Copyright No.

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.



Frontispiece—The Christmas Stocking.

"NOW BEGIN," HE SAID, "BUT YOU MUST 'NT ALL TALK AT ONCE."

See p. 24.

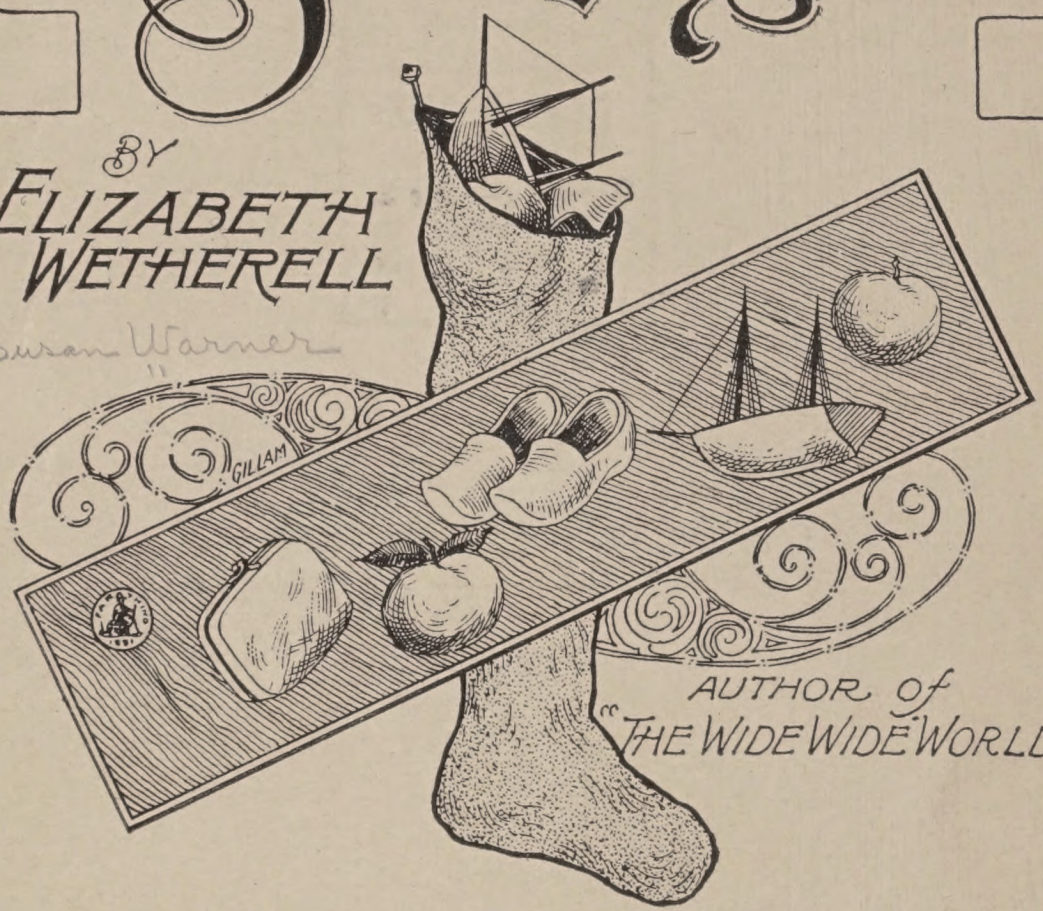
THE Christmas Stocking

BY

ELIZABETH WETHERELL

Susan Warner

"



AUTHOR of "THE WIDE WIDE WORLD"

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY J. H. WILLARD

FORTY FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

PHILADELPHIA:

HENRY ALTEMUS COMPANY

PZ7
C
W247

THE LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS,
Two Copies Received
OCT 13 1903
Copyright Entry
aug. 1-1903
CLASS a XXc. No
65269
COPY B.

35
jnw

Copyright, 1903, by Henry Altemus.

THE LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

INTRODUCTION

THIS story of the *Christmas Stocking* has helped to make many children happy, for without it many fathers and mothers would never have thought of making arrangements for the visit of Santa Claus, who never comes where he is not made welcome.

"Long ago," says a well-known editor and writer—"so very long ago it seems to me now—when I was a very little boy, my father brought home a book called *The Christmas Stocking*. It was only a little book, but that little book has helped to make me happier every Christmas for fifty years. It was the reading of that story in our house which began, for us in the old home,

the practice of hanging up Christmas stockings.''

Probably the best Christmas Stocking which any child, into whose hands this book may be put, can get is the habit of remembering—not only at Christmas time, but at all times—some one who has not all the good things which he himself possesses.

J. H. W.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	Introductory	vii
I.	The Night Before Christmas	13
II.	The Story of The Purse	27
III.	The Story of The Farthing	95
IV.	The Story of The Cork Boat	127

ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

"Now begin," he said, "but you must n't all talk at once" . . . . . *Frontispiece.*

"Down came Santa Claus" 13

"John Krinken sat on an old box making a fish-net" . 15

Mr. Krinken adds a boat to the contents of the famous stocking 17

"'I 'll give him a farthing to fill up the chinks'" . . 19

"'Where did you come from, old stocking?'" . . 23

"'I was in a big fancy-store in London'" . . . 29

The cow causes the death of the owner of the purse . 31

"'She finally put me in her pocket'" 33

The dishonest servant rifles his master's pockets . . 35

"'My mistress opened another small gate'" . . . 37

The young girl stands still and calls the cows . . 39

The cows love to be milked by the gentle hands of the young girl 43

"By-and-by Mrs. Meadow read the Bible" . . . 45

Mrs. Meadow tells Silky that she may keep the purse . 47

Silky asks Norman why he does not buy at one time all the milk he needs 51

"He spread out his hands to the blaze" 53

Poor Little Norman is one of Silky's regular customers 55

ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

Silky tells Norman not to cry, and that she is his friend 59
"The next morning it rained steadily" 61
"They wound an old shawl around him" 63
"'Poor little thing,' said Silky" 65
Norman tells Mrs. Meadow there is no one to care for him 67
Norman comes again for milk but dislikes to be questioned 71
"'A brave fellow offered to take it'" 75
Mrs. Meadow and Silky visit Norman at the factory . 79
"He was looking at Long-Ears" 81
Mrs. Meadow and Silky set out to visit Norman . . 83
"Norman did not look much changed" 87
"'Poor Long-Ears,' he said" 89
"He just slumbered away" 91
The old gentleman slips the bright farthing into his purse 97
"'Oh, grandpa, I 'm so glad you 've come'" 99
The boot-maker's boy says a mistake has been made . 101
"Presently he walked away" 103
The old gentleman refuses to even look at the coin . 105
"'You pretty farthing,' she said" 107
The little girl buys tea for her sick mother with the farthing 109
"He gave the starch to the cook" 111
Nanny asks her mother for the farthing 113
"'She had not even a shawl'" 117
Nanny and her mother reached the baker's shop . 119
"'What will you have, my dear?'" 121
"The baker's boy was sweeping the floor" 123
"Carl placed the boat on the old chest" 129

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

CHAPTER I

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

"WIFE," said John Krinken, "what shall we put in little Carl's stocking to-night?"

"Truly," said his wife, "I do not know. Nevertheless, we must find something, though there be but little in the house."

And the wind swept round and round the old hut, and every cupboard door rattled and said in an empty sort of way, "There is not much here."

John Krinken and his wife lived on the coast, where they could hear every winter storm rage and beat, and where the wild sea sometimes brought wood for them and laid it at their very door. It was a driftwood fire by which they sat now, this Christmas Eve. The andirons were two round stones, and the hearth was a flat one; and in front of the fire sat John Krinken on an old box making a fish-net, while a splinter chair upheld Mrs. Krinken and a half-mended red flannel shirt. An old chest between the two held patches and balls of twine.

"We must find something," repeated John. And pausing with his netting-needle half through the loop, he looked round towards one corner of the hut.

A clean, rosy little face and a very complete set of thick curls rested there, in the very middle of the thin pillow and the hard bed; while the coverlet of blue check was tucked round and in,

lest the driftwood fire should not do its duty at that distance.

"You 've got the stocking, wife?" said John, after a pause.

"JOHN KRINKEN SAT ON AN OLD BOX MAKING A FISH-NET."

"Ay," said his wife, "it 's easy to find something to fill it."

"Fetch it out, then, and let 's see how much 't will take."

Mrs. Krinken arose, and, going to one of the two little cupboards, she brought thence a large

iron key; and then, having placed the patches and thread upon the floor, she opened the chest, and rummaged out a long gray woolen stocking, with white toe and heel and various darns in red. Then she locked the chest again and sat down as before.

"The same old thing," said John Krinken, with a glance at the stocking.

"Well," said his wife, "it 's the only stocking in the house that 's long enough."

"I know one thing he shall have in it," said John; and he got up and went to the other cupboard, and fetched from it a large piece of cork.

"He shall have a boat that will float like one of Mother Carey's chickens." And he began to cut and shape with his large clasp-knife, while the little heap of chips on the floor between his feet grew larger, and the cork grew more and more like a boat.

His wife laid down her hand, which was in the sleeve of the red shirt, and watched him.

"It 'll never do to put that in first," she said; "the masts would be broke. I guess I 'll fill the toe of the stocking with apples."

MR. KRINKEN ADDS A BOAT TO THE CONTENTS OF THE FAMOUS STOCKING.

"Apples!" said John. "Well, I 'll give him a farthing to fill up the chinks."

"And I 've an old purse that he can keep it in," said the mother.

"How long do you suppose he 'll keep it?" said John.

"'I 'LL GIVE HIM A FARTHING TO FILL UP THE CHINKS.'"

"Well, he 'll want to put it somewhere while he does keep it," said Mrs. Krinken. "The purse is old, but it was handsome once; and it 'll please the child, anyway. And then there 's his new shoes."

So when the boat was done, Mrs. Krinken

brought out the apples and slipped them into the stocking; and then the shoes went in, and the purse, and the farthing—which, of course, ran all the way down to the biggest red darn of all, in the very toe of the stocking.

But there was still abundance of room left.

John Krinken and his wife filled it with an old book with silver clasps, and an old sharp-pointed pine cone, and then followed them up with a great deal of love and a blessing.

And then the stocking was quite full.

It was midnight; and the fire had long been covered up, and John Krinken and his wife were fast asleep, and little Carl was in the midst of the hard bed and his sweet dreams as before. The stocking hung by the side of the fireplace, as still as if it had never walked about in its life, and not a sound could be heard but the beat of the surf upon the shore, and an occasional sigh from the wind.

But just at midnight there was another noise heard—as somebody says—

"You could hear on the roof
The scraping and prancing of each little hoof."

and down came Santa Claus through the chimney.

The first thing he did was to examine the stocking and its contents. At some of the articles he laughed, and at some he frowned, but most of all did he shake his head over the love that filled up all the spare room in the stocking. It was a kind of thing Santa Claus was n't used to. But Santa Claus put all the things back just as he had found them, and stood smiling to himself for a minute, with his hands on his sides and his back to the fire. Then tapping the stocking with a little stick that he carried, he bent down over Carl and whispered some words in his ear, and went off up the chimney.

And the little mice came out and danced on the floor till the day broke.

"Christmas day in the morning!" Carl started up in his bed and shouted—

"Merry Christmas!"

The mice were a good deal startled, for they had not all seen their partners home; but they got out of the way as fast as they could, and

when Carl bounded out of bed he stood alone upon the floor.

The floor felt cold—very. Carl's toes curled up in the most disapproving manner possible, and he tried standing on his heels. Then he scampered across the floor. He seized the stocking in both hands and scampered back to bed again, screaming out—

"Apples! apples! apples!"

His mother being now nicely awaked by his clambering over her for the second time, she gave him a kiss and a "merry Christmas," and got up, and as his father did the same, Carl was left in undisturbed possession of the warm bed.

"Mother," said Carl, "I dreamed last night that all my presents told me stories. Was n't it funny?"

"Yes, I suppose so," said his mother, as she walked away to turn the fish that was broiling. Carl lay still and looked at the stocking.

"Where did you come from, old stocking?" said he.

"From England," said the stocking, very softly.

Carl started right up in bed, and looked between the sheets and over the counterpane, and behind the head-board—there was nothing to be seen. Then he shook the stocking as hard as

"'WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, OLD STOCKING?'"

he could, but something in it struck his other hand, pretty hard, too. Carl laid it down and looked at it again, and then cautiously putting in his hand, he with some difficulty found his way to the very toe; there lay the farthing, just

where it had been all the time, upon the biggest of the red darns.

"A farthing!" cried Carl. "Oh, I guess it was you talking, was n't it?"

"No," said it. "But I can talk."

"Do you know where you came from?" said Carl, staring at it with all his eyes.

"Certainly," said the farthing.

"I dreamed that everything in my stocking told me a story," said Carl.

"So we will," said the farthing. "Only to you. To nobody else."

As soon as breakfast was over, Carl carried the stocking to one corner of the hut, where stood another old chest; and laying out all his treasures thereon, he knelt down before it.

"Now begin," he said. "But you must n't all talk at once. I guess I 'll hear the purse first."

THE STORY OF THE PURSE

CHAPTER II

THE STORY OF THE PURSE

"THE first place where I was settled was in a big fancy-store in London," the purse began. "I am made of sealskin, the sides, and my studs and clasp are silver. I feel very dull now. But in those days I was as bright as a butterfly, and as handsome. My sides were a beautiful bright red. The next place I was in was a gentleman's pocket."

"How did you get there?" asked Carl.

"He came to buy a purse, and so a number of us were thrown out upon the counter, and he looked at us and tried us, and bought me and put me in his pocket. There my business was to hold guineas and half-guineas, and crowns and half-crowns, and all sorts of beautiful pieces of silver and gold. I did n't stay long with him,

however. He was traveling in some part of England with a friend, riding over a wide, lonely plain one day; and they saw a little distance ahead a cow in the road, lying down, right across their path. 'Stapleton,' said my master, 'let us clear that cow.' 'Can't your servant do that?' said Mr. Stapleton. 'Do what?' said my master. 'Clear that beast from the road,' said his friend. 'Pshaw!' said my master—'I mean let us clear her at a bound. Leave her in quiet possession of the road, and we take an air-line over her back.' 'Suppose she took a stupid notion to get out of our way just as we are in hers?' said Mr. Stapleton. 'I don't suppose anything of the kind,' said my master; 'we shall be too quick for her.' With that they put spurs to their horses, but it happened that Mr. Stapleton's horse got the start and was a little ahead. *He* cleared the cow well enough, but unluckily it gave her an impression that just where she was it was a poor place to be; and she was throwing up her hind legs at the very minute my master came to take the leap. He was flung over and over, he and his horse, over and under

each other—I don't know how. I only know my master was killed.

"His friend and his servant picked him up and laid him by the roadside; and while Mr. Stapleton went full speed to the nearest town

"'I WAS IN A BIG FANCY-STORE IN LONDON.'"

to get help, the other stayed behind to take care of his master, and do what could be done for him. But he very soon found that nothing could be done; and then, as nobody was in sight, he took

the opportunity to do what he could for himself, by rifling his master's pockets. He pulled out several things which I suppose he did n't dare to keep, for he put them back again after a careful look at them, and after carefully taking off some seals from the watch-chain. I did not fare so well. He had me in his hands a long time, taking out and putting in silver and gold pieces —afraid to keep too much, and not willing to leave a crown that might be kept safely, when a sudden step heard near, and the bursting out of a loud whistle, startled him. He jumped as if he had been shot, which was natural enough, as he was running a pretty good chance of getting hanged. I was dropped, or thrown behind him, in the grass, and before the countryman who came up had done asking questions, the horses of Mr. Stapleton and assistants were seen over the rising ground. They carried away my unfortunate first master, and left me in the grass.

"I knew I should n't stay there long, but I was found sooner than I hoped. Before the evening had closed in, the sun was shining yet, I heard the tread of light feet—somebody near-

THE COW CAUSES THE DEATH OF THE OWNER OF THE PURSE.

ing the road and then crossing it. In crossing, this somebody came just upon me, and a kind sunbeam touching one of my silver points, I embraced the opportunity to shine as hard as I could. I shone so she could not help seeing

"'SHE FINALLY PUT ME IN HER POCKET.'"

me. It was a girl about fifteen or sixteen years old: a slim figure, very tidy in her dress, with light-brown hair nicely put back from her face, and her face a very quiet, sweet one. She looked at me, inside and out, looked up and

down the road, as if to see where I had come from, and finally put me in her pocket. I was very glad nobody was in sight anywhere, for I knew by her face she would have given me up directly. She left the road then and went on over the common, which was a wide, lonely barren plain, grass-grown, and with here and there a bunch of bushes or a low, stunted tree. She was going after her cows, to bring them home; and presently, seeing them in the distance, she stood still and began to call them.

"When they got up with their little mistress, she set off to go home, and the whole five of them followed gravely in order.

"A little way beyond this, not more than a quarter of a mile, we came to a small brown house, with one or two out-buildings. The house stood in a little field, and the out-buildings in another little field, close beside this one. Everything was small; house and barn and shed, and cow-field and garden-field; but it was all snug, and neat, too.

"My mistress opened a gate of the barnyard, and held it while all the five cows marched

THE DISHONEST SERVANT RIFLES HIS MASTER'S POCKETS.

slowly in, looking around them as if they expected to see some change made in the arrangements since they had gone out in the morning.

"When my mistress had shut the gate upon the five cows, she opened another small gate in the

"'MY MISTRESS OPENED ANOTHER SMALL GATE.'"

fence of the field where the house stood; and there she went in, through two beds of roses and sweet herbs that were on each side of the narrow walk, up to the door, that stood open to let her in.

"It was the nicest place you ever saw. A clean scrubbed floor, with a thick, coarse piece of carpet covering the middle of it; a dark wooden table and wooden chairs, nice and in their places, only one chair stood on the hearth, as if somebody had just left it. There was a big, wide, comfortable fireplace, with a fire burning in it, and over the fire hung a big iron tea-kettle, in the very midst of the flames, and singing already. On each side of the chimney brown wooden cupboards filled up the whole space from the floor to the ceiling. All was tidy and clean. The hearth looked as if you might have baked cakes on it.

"The girl stood a minute before the fire, and then went to the inner door and called 'Mother!'

"A pleasant voice from somewhere said, 'Here!'

" 'In the milk-room?'

" 'Yes!'

" 'Look here what I 've found, mother.'

" 'Can't look at anything, daughter. Go along and milk, and I will hear you at tea-time.'

"Then my little mistress took up the pails,

THE YOUNG GIRL STANDS STILL AND CALLS THE COWS.

and went out by another way, through another gate that opened directly into the cows' yard; and there she stripped the yellow sweet milk into the pails, from every one of the five cows she had driven home. Not one of them but loved to be milked by her hand; they enjoyed it, every cow of them, standing quiet and sleepily munching the cud, except when now and then one of them would throw back her head furiously at some fly on her side.

"Mrs. Meadow, which was the woman's name, took the milk pails at the dairy door, and my mistress came back into the kitchen to get tea. She put up a leaf of the brown table and set a tray on it, and out of one of the cupboards she fetched two tea-cups and saucers; so I knew there were no more in the family. Then two little blue-edged plates and horn-handled knives, and the rest of the things; and when the tea was made she dressed up the fire, and stood looking at it and the tea-table by turns, till her mother showed herself at the door, and came in, taking off her apron. She was the nicest-looking woman you ever saw."

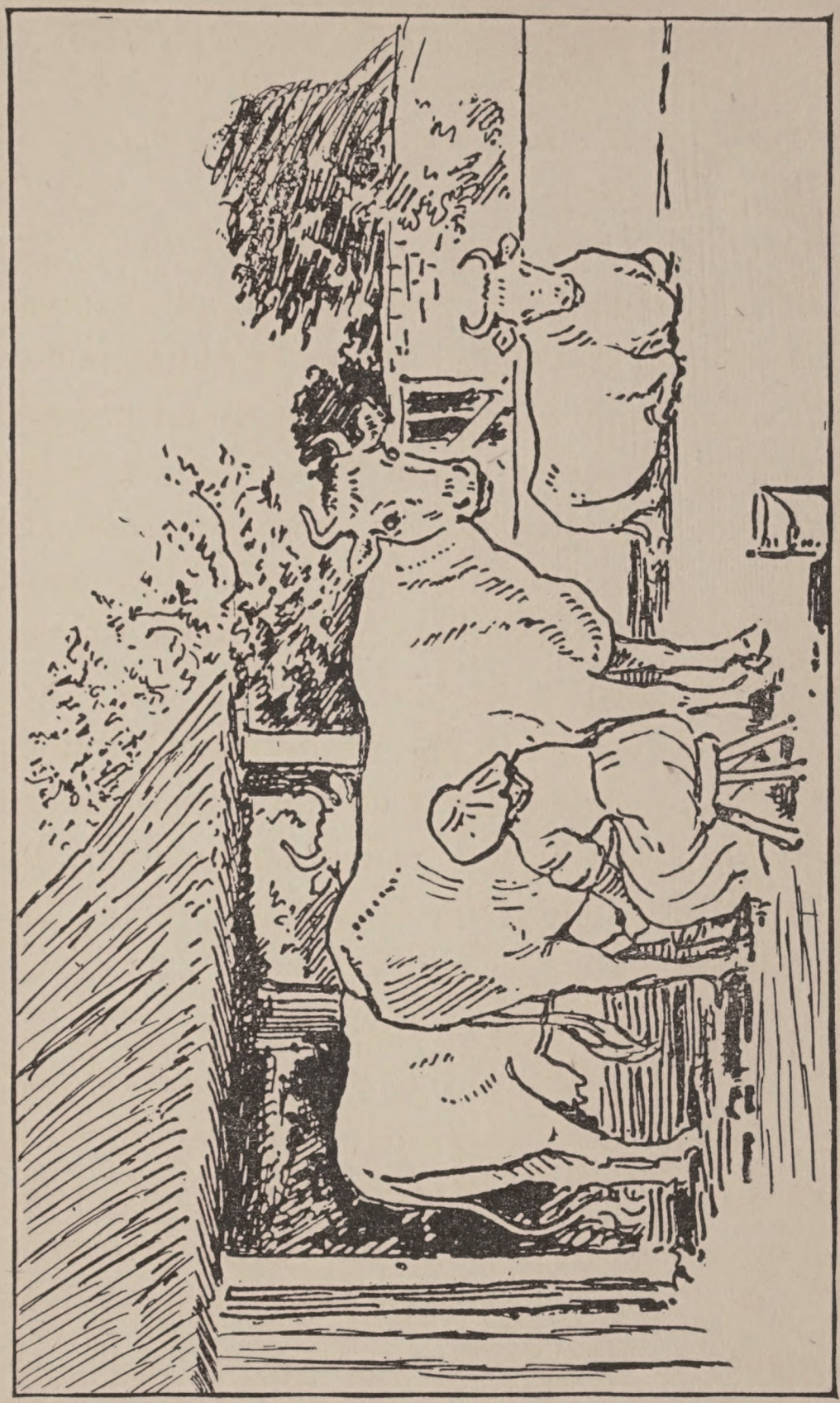
"She was n't as nice as my mother," said Carl.

"Mrs. Krinken never was half so nice. She was the best-natured, cheerfullest, pleasantest-faced woman you could find, as bright as one of her own red apples. Everything about her was bright. Her spoons, and the apples, and the brass candlesticks, and the milk-pans, and the glass in the windows, and her own kind heart. The mother and daughter had a very cosy tea, and I was laid upon the table and my story told, or rather the story of my being found; and it was decided that I should remain in the keeping of the finder, whom her mother, by some freak of habit, rarely called anything but 'Silky.' "

"What for?" said Carl.

"Maybe you'll find out if you don't ask so many questions," said the purse, snappishly. 'It 's yours, Silky,' Mrs. Meadow said, after looking at me and rubbing the silver mountings. 'It 's odd such a handsome purse should have no money in it.'

" 'I 'm not going to put it away out of sight,



THE COWS LOVE TO BE MILKED BY THE GENTLE HANDS OF THE YOUNG GIRL.

mother,' said Silky; 'I 'm going to have the good of it. I 'll keep it to hold my milk-money.''

"'Well, dear, here goes the first,' said Mrs. Meadow;—'here 's a silver penny I took for milk while you were after the cows.'

"BY-AND-BY MRS. MEADOW READ THE BIBLE."

"Who came for it, mother?'

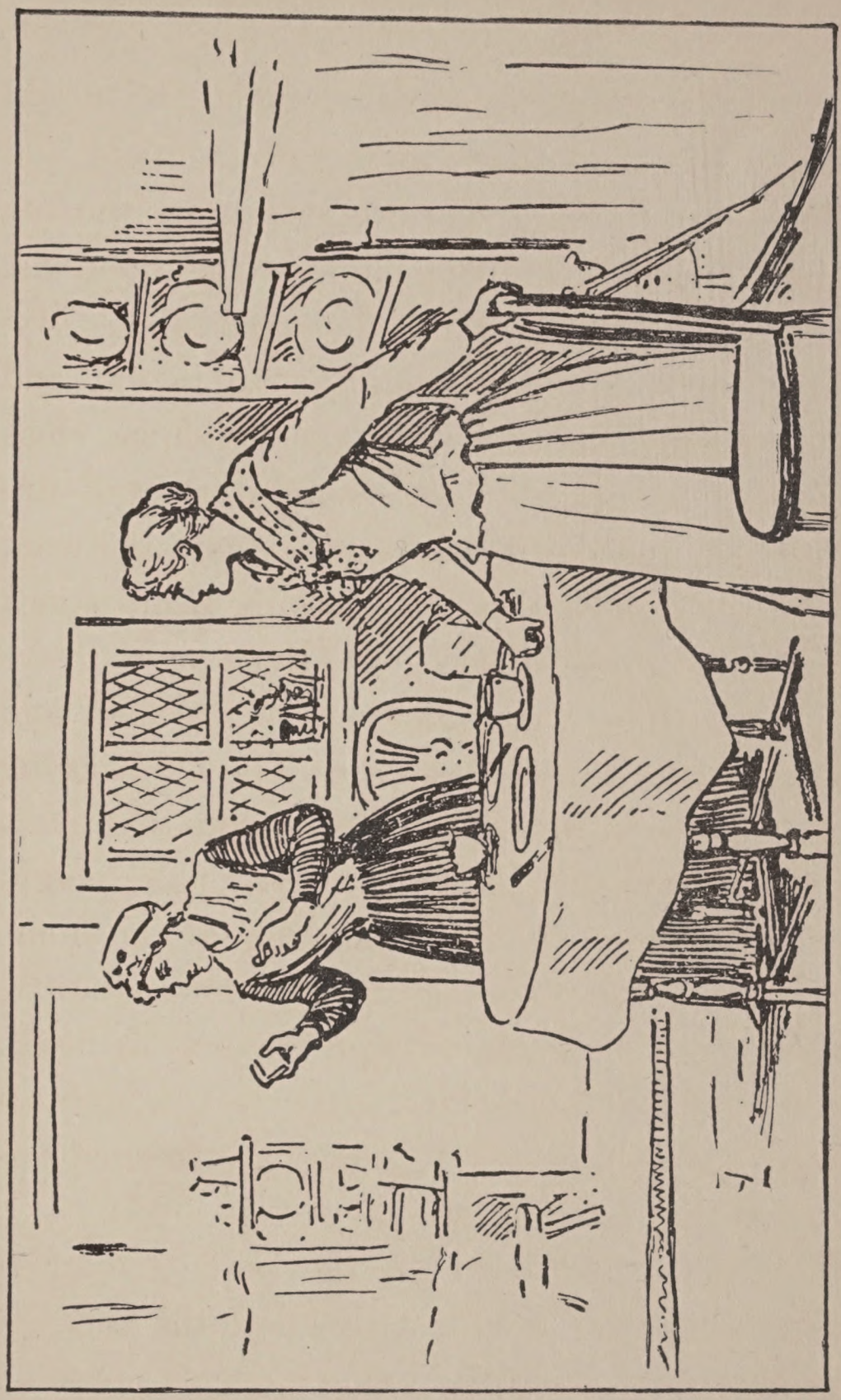
"'Don't know—a lady riding by—and she gave me this.'

"So a little silver coin was slipped into my emptiness, and my little mistress laid me on a

shelf of the other cupboard, alongside of an old Bible. But she left the door a crack open; and I could see them at work, washing up the tea things, and then knitting and sewing upon the hearth, both of them by a little round table. By-and-by Mrs. Meadow took the Bible out and read, and then she and Silky kneeled down, close together, to pray. They covered up the fire after that, and shut the cupboard door, and went off to bed; and I was left to think what a new place I had come to, and how I liked it.

"My business was to lie there on the shelf and keep the milk-pennies, and see all that was going on. Silky sold the milk. The people that came for it were mostly poor people from the neighboring village, or their children going home from the factory; people that lived in poor little dwellings in the town, without gardens or fields, or a cow to themselves, and just bought a penny's worth, or a half-penny's, at a time—as little as they could do with.

"After I had been on the cupboard shelf awhile, however, and got to know the faces, I saw there was one little boy who came morning



MRS. MEADOW TELLS SILKY THAT SHE MAY KEEP THE PURSE.

and evening, too. In the morning he fetched a half-pennyworth and in the evening a pennyworth of milk in a stout little brown jug; always the same brown jug; and always in the morning he wanted a half-pennyworth, and in the evening a pennyworth. He was a small fellow, with a shock of red hair, and his face all marked with the small-pox. He was one of the poorest-looking that came. There was never a hat on his head; his trousers were fringed with tags; his feet bare of shoes or stockings. His jacket was always fastened close up, either to keep him warm or to hide how very little there was under it. Poor little Norman Finch! That was his name.

"He had come a good many mornings. One day, early, just as Mrs. Meadow and Silky were getting breakfast, his little red head poked itself in again at the door with his little brown jug, and 'Please, ma'am—a ha'penn'orth.'

" 'Why don't you get all you want at once, Norman?' said Silky, when she brought the milk.

" 'I don't want only a ha'penn'orth,' said Norman.

"'Why don't you take it all at once?'

"'I don't want it.'

"'Are you going to the factory?'

"'Yes, I be.'

"'How will your mother get her milk?'

"'She 'll get it when I go home.'

"'But not this, Norman. What do you want this for?'

"'I want it. She don't want it,' said the boy, looking troubled; 'I must go.'

"'Do you take it to drink at the factory?'

"'No—it 's to drink at the factory—she don't want it,' said Norman.

"He went off. But as Silky set the breakfast on the table, she said:

"'Mother, I don't understand; I am afraid there is something wrong about this morning milk.'

"'Don't think anything, dear,' said Mrs. Meadow, 'till we know something more. We'll get the child to let it out. Poor little creature! I wish I could keep him out of that place.'

"'Which place, mother?'

"'I meant the factory.'

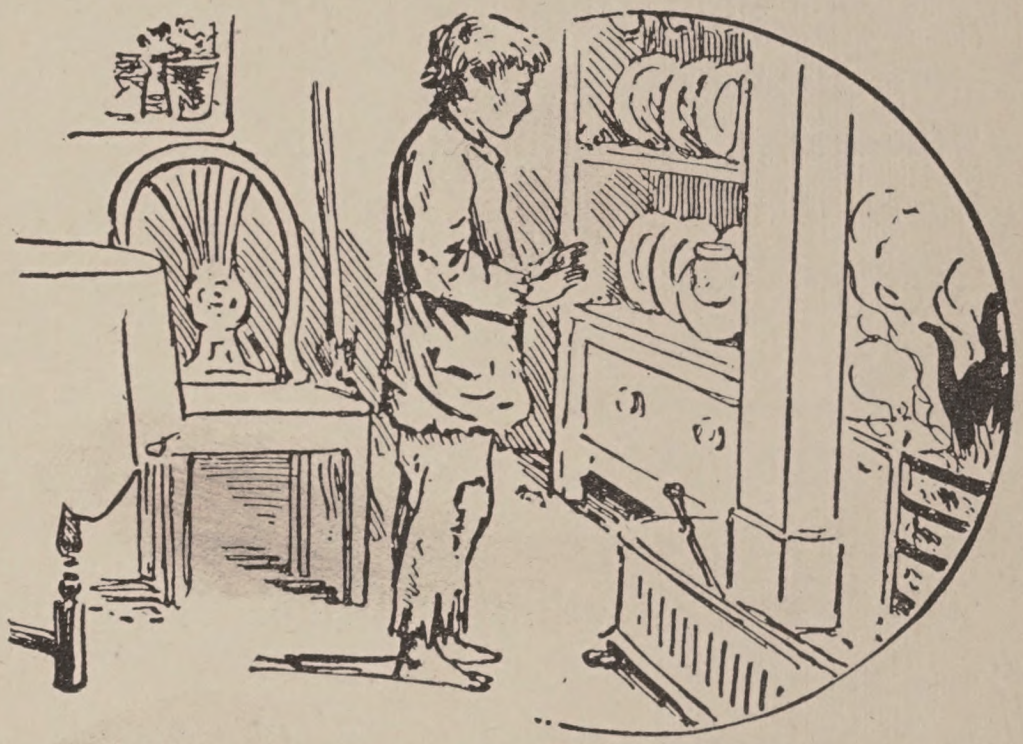
SILKY ASKS NORMAN WHY HE DOES NOT BUY AT ONE TIME ALL THE MILK HE NEEDS.

"The next morning Norman was there again. He put himself and his jug only half in at the door, and said, somewhat doubtfully:

" 'Please, ma'am, a ha'penn'orth?'

" 'Come in, Norman,' said Silky.

"He hesitated.



"HE SPREAD OUT HIS HANDS TO THE BLAZE."

" 'Come!—come in—come in to the fire; it 's chilly out of doors. You are in good time, are n't you?'

" 'Yes—but I can't stay,' said the boy, coming in, however, and walking slowly up to the

fire. But he came close, and his two hands spread themselves to the blaze as if they liked it, and the poor little bare feet shone in the firelight on the hearth. It was early, very cool and damp abroad.

"'I 'll get you the milk,' said Silky, taking the jug; 'you stand and warm yourself. You 've plenty of time.'

"She came back with the jug in one hand and a piece of cold bacon in the other, which she offered to Norman. He looked at it, and then grabbed it, and began to eat immediately. Silky stood opposite to him with the jug.

"'What 's this milk for, Norman?' she said, pleasantly.

"He stopped eating and looked troubled directly.

"'You need n't be afraid to tell me, dear,' Silky said, gently. 'I 'm not going to do you any harm. Does your mother know you get it?'

"He waited a good while, and then when she repeated the question, taking another look at Silky's kind, quiet face, he said, half under his breath—

POOR LITTLE NORMAN IS ONE OF SILKY'S REGULAR CUSTOMERS.

"'No.'

"'What do you want it for, then, dear? I 'd rather give it to you than have you take it in a wrong way. Do you want it to drink?'

"'Oh, don't tell!' sobbed the child. "It 's for my little dog!'

"'Now don't cry!' said Silky. 'Your little dog?'

"'Yes! my little dog.' And he sighed deeply between the words.

"'Where is your little dog?'

"'He 's up yonder—up at the factory.'

"'Who gave him to you?'

"'Nobody did n't give him to me. I found him.'

"'Does your mother know you get the milk?'

"Norman did n't answer.

"'She don't,' said Silky. 'Then where does the money come from, Norman?' She spoke very gently.

"'It 's mine,' said Norman.

"'Yes, but where do you get it?'

"'Mr. Swift gives it to me.'

"'Is it out of your wages?'

"Norman hesitated, and then said 'Yes,' and began to cry again.

" 'What 's the matter?' said Silky. 'Sit down and tell me about him. What color is he?'

" 'He 's white all over, and his name is Little Curly Long-Ears.'

" 'But why don't you feed him at home, Norman?'

" 'Father would n't let me. He 'd take him away, or do something to him.' Norman looked dismal.

" 'But where does he live?'

" 'He lives up at the factory, because Mr. Carroll said he was to come in, he was so handsome.'

" 'But your money—where does it come from, Norman?'

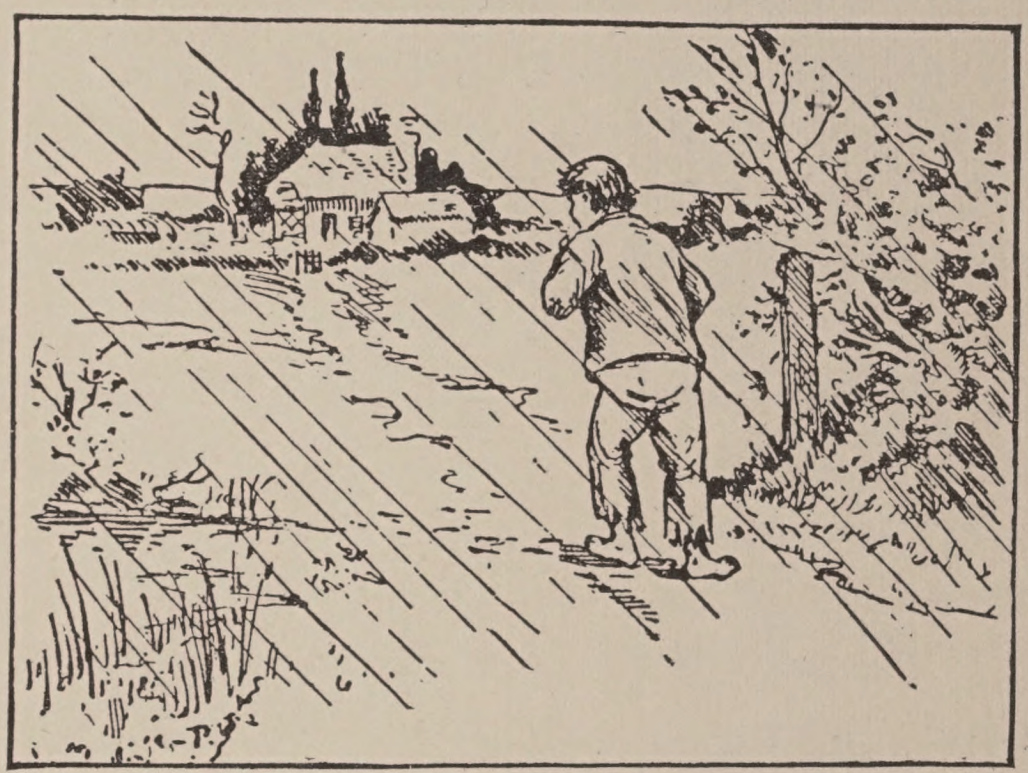
" 'Mr. Swift,' said Norman, very dismally.

" 'Then does n't your mother miss it, when you carry home your wages to her?'

" 'No, she don't, 'cause I carry her just the same I did before. I get more now—I used to have fourpence ha'penny, and now they give me fi'pence.'

SILKY TELLS NORMAN NOT TO CRY, AND THAT SHE IS HIS FRIEND.

"And Norman burst into a terrible fit of crying, as if his secret was out, and it was all up with him and his dog, too. 'Give me the milk and let me go!' he exclaimed through his tears. 'Poor Curly!—poor Curly!'



"THE NEXT MORNING IT RAINED STEADILY."

"'Here 't is,' said Silky, very kindly. 'Don't cry—I 'm not going to hurt you, or Curly either.'

"He dried his tears, and ran, fast enough, holding the little brown jug carefully at half-

arm's length, and his bare feet pattering over the ground as fast as his short legs could make them.

"The next morning Norman came again, and Mrs. Meadow was there.

" 'Suppose,' said Mrs. Meadow, kindly, 'you come and see me to-morrow—it 's Sunday, you know, and you have no work—will you? Come bright and early, and we 'll have a nice breakfast, and you shall go to church with me if you like.'

"Norman shook his head. 'Curly 'll want to see me,' he said.

" 'Well, about that just as you like. Come here to breakfast—*that* you can do.'

"The next morning it rained—steadily, constantly, straight up and down. But at the usual time Mrs. Meadow and Silky were getting breakfast.

" 'I 'm so sorry, mother,' said Silky; 'he won't come.'

"She had hardly turned her back to see to something at the fire, when there he was behind her, standing in the middle of the floor; in no

Sunday dress, but in his everyday rags, and those wet through and dripping. How glad and how sorry both mother and daughter looked! They brought him to the fire and wiped his feet, and wrung the water from his clothes as well

"THEY WOUND AN OLD SHAWL AROUND HIM."

as they could, but they did n't know what to do; for the fire would not have dried him all the day; and sit down to breakfast dry, with him soaking wet at her side, Mrs. Meadow could not. What to put on him was the trouble; she had no chil-

dren's clothes at all in the house. But she managed. She stripped off his rags and tacked two or three towels about him, and then over them wound a large old shawl, in some mysterious way, fastening it over his shoulders, in such a manner that it fell round him like a loose straight frock, leaving his arms quite free. Then, when his jacket and trousers had been put to dry, they sat down to breakfast.

"After breakfast, Mrs. Meadow left Silky to take care of the things; and, drawing her chair up on the hearth, she took the little boy on her lap and wound her arms about him.

" 'Little Norman,' said she, kindly, 'you won't see Long-Ears to-day.'

" 'No,' said Norman, with a sigh, in spite of breakfast and fire; 'he will have to go without me.'

" 'Is n't it good that there is one day in the week when the poor little tired pin-boy can rest?'

" 'Yes—it is good,' said Norman, quietly, but as if he was too accustomed to being tired to take the good of it.

"'Can you read the Bible, Norman?'

"'No, I can't read,' said Norman. 'Mother can.'

"'You know the Bible is God's book, written to tell us how to be good, and whatever the Bible

"'POOR LITTLE THING,' SAID SILKY."

says we should mind. Now, the Bible says, *Thou shalt not steal.* Do you know what that means?'

"'Yes,' said Norman, swinging one little foot back and forward in the warm shine of the fire; 'I 've heard it.'

"'It is to take what does not belong to us. Now, since God has said that, is it quite right for you to take that money of your mother's to buy milk for Long-Ears?'

"'It *is n't* her money,' said Norman, his face changing; 'and Long-Ears can't starve!'

"'It is her money, Norman; all the money you earn belongs to her, or to your father, which is the same thing. You know it does.'

"'But Curly must have something to eat,' said Norman, bursting into tears.

"'Hush, dear. Do you know who Jesus Christ is?' said Mrs. Meadow's kind voice, and her kind hand on his head.

"'No.'

"'Poor little thing!' said Silky, and the tears fell from her face as she went from the fire to the table. Norman looked at her, and so did her mother, and then they looked at each other.

"'Jesus Christ is your best friend, little Norman.'

"'It 's all told about in God's book, dear. Little Norman Finch, like everybody else, has n't loved God, nor minded His commandments as he

NORMAN TELLS MRS. MEADOW THERE IS NO ONE TO CARE FOR HIM.

ought to do; and God would have punished us all, if Jesus Christ had n't come down from heaven on purpose to take our punishment on Himself, so that we might be saved.'

"'What did He do that for?' said Norman.

"'Because He is so good. He loved us, and wanted to save us and bring us back to be His children, and to be good and happy.'

"'Does He love me?' said Norman.

"'Yes, indeed,' said Mrs. Meadow. 'Do you think He came to die for you and does n't love you? If you will love and obey Him, He will love you forever, and take care of you; better care than any one else can.'

"'There is n't anybody else to take care of me,' said Norman. 'Mother can't, and father don't much. I wish I knew about that.'

"With a look of wonder and interest at her daughter, Mrs. Meadow reached after her Bible, without letting Norman down from her lap; and turning from place to place, read to him the story of Christ's death, and various parts of His life and teaching. He listened, gravely and con-

stantly and intently, and seemed not to weary of it at all, till she was tired and obliged to stop. He made no remark then, but sat a little while with a sober face, till his old fatigue of days past came over him, and his eyelids drooped, and slipping from Mrs. Meadow's lap, he laid himself down on the hearth to sleep. They put something under his head and sat watching him, the eyes of both every now and then running over.

"When the little sleeper awoke, they bent all their attention to giving him a pleasant day. He had a good dinner and a nice supper. His clothes were thoroughly dried; and Mrs. Meadow said, when she put them on, that if she could only get a chance of a week-day, she would patch them up comfortably for him. Towards nightfall the rain stopped, and he went home dry and warm, and with a good piece of cheese and a loaf of plain gingerbread under his arm. When he was all ready to set out he paused at the door, and looking up at Mrs. Meadow, said:

" 'Does He say we must n't steal?'

" 'Yes, to be sure. The Bible says it, and the

NORMAN COMES AGAIN FOR MILK BUT DISLIKES TO BE QUESTIONED.

Bible is God's Word; and Jesus said it over again when He was on the earth.'

"Norman stood a quarter of a minute, and then went out and closed the door.

"The next morning they looked eagerly for him. But he did not come. He stopped at evening, as usual, but Silky was just then busy and did not speak to him beyond a word. Tuesday morning he did not come. At night he was there again with his jug.

" 'How do you do, Norman?' said Mrs. Meadow, when she filled it, 'and how is Long-Ears?'

"But Norman did not answer, and turned to go.

" 'Come here in the morning, Norman,' Mrs. Meadow called after him.

"Whether he heard her or not, he did not show himself on his way to the factory next morning. That was Wednesday.

" 'Norman has n't been here these three days, mother,' said Silky. 'Can it be he has made up his mind to do without his half-pennyworth of milk for the dog?'

" 'Little fellow!' said Mrs. Meadow, 'I meant

to have given it to him; skim milk would do, I dare say; but I forget to tell him Sunday; and I told him last night to stop, but he has n't done it. We 'll go up to the factory, Silky, and see how he is, after dinner.'

"After dinner they went, and I went in Silky's pocket. Mrs. Meadow asked for Mr. Swift, and presently he came.

" 'Is little Norman Finch at work to-day, Mr. Swift?'

" 'Norman Finch? Well, yes, ma'am, he 's to work,' said the overseer; 'he don't *do* much work this day or so. He has n't hard work, neither; but he 's a poor little billet of a boy.'

" 'Is he is good boy, sir?'

" 'I don't know any harm of him,' said Mr. Swift. 'He 's about like the common. Not particularly strong in the head, nor anywhere else, for that matter; but he is a good-feeling child. Yes—now I remember. It 's as much as a year ago, that I was mad with him one day, and was going to give the careless little rascal a strapping for something, and a bold, brave fellow in the same room, about twice as big and six times

as strong as Norman, offered to take it and spare him. *I* did n't care; it answered my purpose of keeping order just as well that Bill Bollings should have it as Norman Finch, if he had a mind; and ever since that time Finch has been ready to lay down his body and soul for Bollings,

"'A BRAVE FELLOW OFFERED TO TAKE IT.'"

if it could do him any service. He 's a good-hearted boy, I do suppose.'

"'What a noble boy, the other one!' said Mrs. Meadow.

"'Ha! well—*that* was noble enough,' said Mr.

Swift; 'but he 's a kind of harum-scarum fellow —just as likely to get himself into a scrape to-morrow as to get somebody else out of one to-day.'

" 'That was noble,' repeated Mrs. Meadow.

" 'Norman has never forgotten it. As I said, he 'd lay down body and soul for him. There 's a little pet dog he has, too' Mr. Swift went on, 'that I believe he 'd do as much for. A pretty creature! I would have bought it of him, and given a good price for it, but he seemed frightened at the proposal. I believe he keeps the creature here partly for fear he would lose him at home.'

" 'May we go in, sir, and see Norman for a moment?'

" 'Certainly,' Mr. Swift said; and himself led the way.

"Through several long rooms and rows of workers went Mr. Swift, and Mrs. Meadow and Silky after him, to the one where they found little Norman. He was standing before some sort of a machine, folding papers and pressing them against rows of pins, that were held all in

order, and with their points ready, by two pieces of iron in the machine. Norman was not working smartly, and looked already jaded, though it was early in the afternoon. Close at his feet, almost touching him, lay the little white dog. A very little and most beautiful creature. Soft, white, curling hair, and large silky ears that drooped to the floor, as he lay with his head upon his paws, and two gentle brown eyes looked almost pitifully up at the strangers. He did not get up; nor did Norman look round, till Mrs. Meadow spoke to him.

"When he heard Mrs. Meadow's soft, 'Norman, how do you do?' his fingers fell from the row of pin points, and he turned towards her, looking a good deal surprised and a little pleased, but with a very sober face.

" 'How comes it you have n't been for Long-Ears' milk these days?'

" 'I—I could n't," said Norman. 'I had n't any money—I gave it to mother." He spoke low and with some difficulty.

" 'And what has Long-Ears done, dear, without his milk?'

"Norman was silent, and his mouth twitched. Mrs. Meadow looked at the little dog, which lay still where he had been when she came in, his gentle eyes having, she thought, a curious sort of wistfulness in their note-taking.

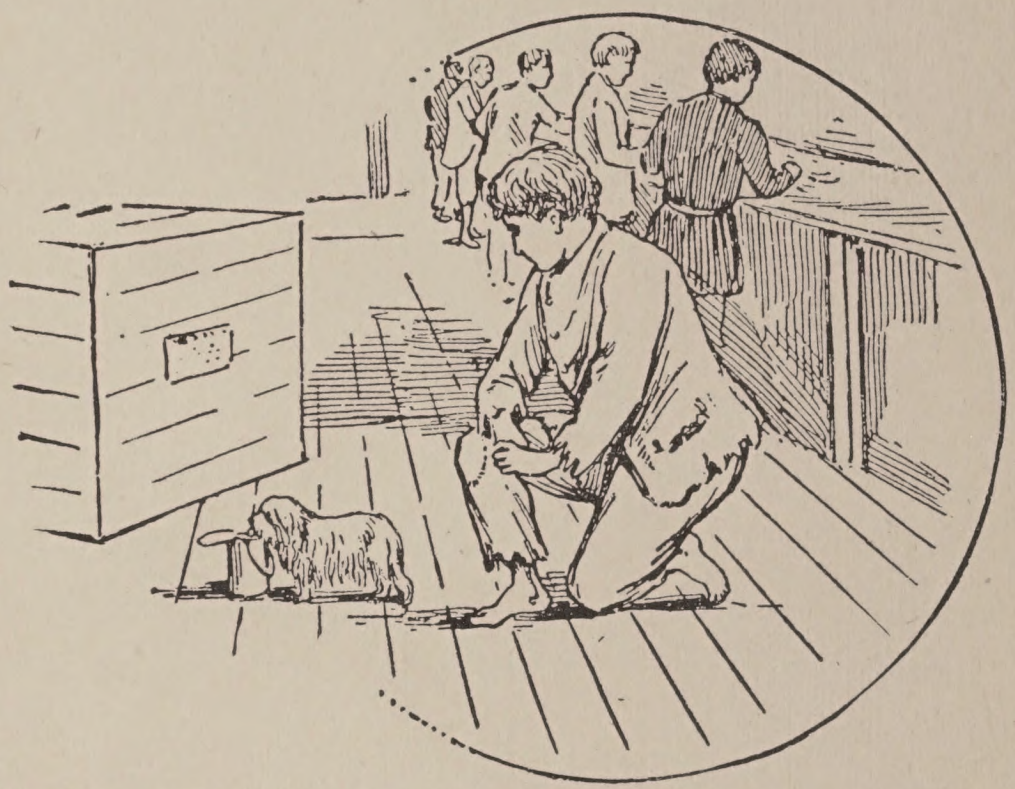
" 'I 've brought him some milk,' whispered Silky; and, softly stooping down, she uncovered her little tin pail and tried to coax the dog to come to it. But Norman no sooner caught the words of her whisper and saw the pail, than his spirit gave way; he burst into a bitter fit of crying, and threw himself down on the floor and hid his face.

" 'Oh, well,' said Mr. Swift—'but he must n't make such a disturbance about it—it 's against all order; and feeding the dog, too!—but it 's a pretty creature. He 's hungry, he is! Well! it 's well we don't have ladies come to the factory every day.'

"The boy was quiet enough now. While Mr. Swift had been speaking he raised himself from the floor, half up, and had stopped sobbing, and was looking at Long-Ears and gently touching his curly head; who, on his part, was lapping the

MRS. MEADOW AND SILKY VISIT NORMAN AT THE FACTORY.

milk with an eagerness as if he had wanted it for some time. Norman's tears fell yet, but they fell quietly. By the time the little dog had finished the milk they did not fall at all. Till then nobody said anything.



"HE WAS LOOKING AT LONG-EARS."

"'Come for it every morning again, my child,' said Mrs. Meadow, softly; 'I 'll give it to you. What a dear little fellow he is! I don't wonder you love him. He shall have milk enough.'

"Norman looked up gratefully, and with a little bit of a smile.

"You don't look very strong, my boy," said Mrs. Meadow. 'You don't feel well, do you?'

"He shook his head, as if it was a matter beyond his understanding.

" 'Are you tired?'

"His eyes gave token of understanding that. 'Yes, I 'm tired.'

"Norman came after that every morning for the dog's milk; and many a Sunday he and Long-Ears passed part of the time with Mrs. Meadow; and many a reading he listened to there as he had listened to the first one. He did n't talk much. He was always near his little dog, and he seemed quietly to enjoy everything at those times.

"As the summer changed into autumn, and autumn gave way to winter, Norman's little face seemed to grow better-looking, all the while it was growing more pale, and his little body more slim. It grew to be a contented, very quiet and patient face, and his eye took a clearness and openness it did not use to have, though he never

MRS. MEADOW AND SILKY SET OUT TO VISIT NORMAN.

was a *bad*-looking child. 'He won't live long,' Mrs. Meadow said, after every Sunday.

"The little white dog all this while grew more white and curly and bright-eyed every day; or they all thought so.

"It was not till some time in January that at last Norman stopped coming for milk, and did not go by to the factory any more. It was in a severe bit of weather, when Mrs. Meadow was shut up with a bad cold; and some days were gone before she or Silky could get any news of him. Then, one cold evening, his mother came for milk, and to say that Norman was very ill and would like to see Silky and Mrs. Meadow.

"They got ready directly. Silky put her purse in her pocket, as she generally did when she was going to see poor people, and, wrapping up warm with cloaks and shawls and hoods, she and her mother set out. It was just sunset of a winter's day, clear enough, but uncommonly cold.

"Silky was trembling all over by the time they stopped at one of the brick dwelling-houses and went in. The front door stood open; nobody

minded that; it was nobody's business to shut it. They went in, through a dirty entry, and up stairs that nobody ever thought of cleaning, to the third story. There Mrs. Meadow first knocked, and then gently opened the door. A man was there, sitting over the fire; a wretched tallow light on the table hardly showed what he looked like. Mrs. Meadow spoke with her usual pleasantness.

" 'Good evening, Mr. Finch. Can I see little Norman?'

" 'Yes—I suppose so,' the man said, in a gruff voice, and pointing to another door; 'they 're in yonder.'

"It was so dark, hardly anything could be seen. A woman rose up from some corner—it proved to be Mrs. Finch—and went for the light.

"The room was ill-lighted when the candle was in it, but there could be seen two beds; one raised on some sort of a bedstead, the other on the floor in a corner. No fire was in this room, and the bed was covered with all sorts of coverings; a torn quilt, an old great-coat, a small ragged worsted shawl, and Norman's own poor

little jacket and trousers. But on these, close within reach of the boy's hand, lay curled the little dog; his glossy white hair and soft outlines making a strange contrast with the rags and poverty and ugliness of the place.

"NORMAN DID NOT LOOK MUCH CHANGED."

"Norman did not look much changed, except that his face was so very pale it seemed as if he had no more blood to leave it. Mrs. Meadow and Silky came near, and neither of them at first was forward to speak. Mrs. Finch stood hold-

ing the light. Then Mrs. Meadow stooped down by the bed's head.

" 'Little Norman,' she said—and you could tell her heart was full of tears—'do you know me?'

" 'I know you,' he said, in a weak voice, and with a little bit of a smile.

" 'How do you do?'

" 'Very well,' he said, in the same manner. 'I am going now.'

" 'Where, dear?'

" 'You know—to that good place. Jesus will take me, won't He?'

" 'What makes you think you 're going, dear?' said Mrs. Meadow.

" 'I can 't stay,' said Norman, shutting his eyes. He opened them again immediately. 'I 'm going,' he said. 'I 'm so tired. I sha'n't be tired there, shall I?'

" 'No, dear,' said Mrs. Meadow, whose power of speech was like to fail her. She kept wiping her face with her pocket handkerchief. Norman stroked and stroked his little dog's silky head.

"'Poor Long-Ears!' said he, faintly; 'poor Long-Ears!—I can't take care of you now. Poor Long-Ears! you 're hungry. He has n't had anything to eat since—since—mother!'

"'He don't know how time goes,' said Mrs.

"'POOR LONG-EARS,' HE SAID."

Finch, who had not before spoken. 'The dog has n't had a sup of anything since the day before yesterday. He has a right to be hungry. I don't know what he lives on. My husband don't care whether anything lives or not.'

"Silky had not said a word, and she did n't now, but she brought out that same little tin pail from under her cloak, and set it down on the floor. Norman's eye brightened. But the dog could not be coaxed to quit the bed; he would set only his two fore-feet on the floor, and so drank the milk out of the pail. Norman watched him, almost with a smile. And when the dog, having left the milk, curled himself down again in his old place, and looked into his master's face, Norman quite smiled.

"'Poor Long-Ears!' he said, patting him again with a feeble hand. 'I 'm going to leave you—what will you do?'

"'I 'll take care of him, Norman,' said Mrs. Meadow. 'As long as he lives, if you wish.'

"Norman signed for her to put her ear down to him, and said earnestly:

"'I give him to you—you keep him. Will you?'

"'Yes, indeed, I will,' said Mrs. Meadow.

"'Then you 'll have milk enough, dear little Long-Ears,' said Norman. 'But,' he said eagerly to Mrs. Meadow, 'you must take him

home with you to-night—I 'm afraid father will do something with him, if you don't.'

" 'But you will want him,' said Mrs. Meadow.

" 'No, I won't. Father will do something with him.'

"HE JUST SLUMBERED AWAY."

" 'Then I 'll take him, and keep him, dear, as if he was yourself,' said Mrs. Meadow.

"I won't want him,' said Norman, shutting his eyes again; 'I 'm going.'

"And he never opened them again. It seemed

that having his mind easy about his pet, and having seen his friends, he wanted nothing more on this earth. He just slumbered away a few hours, and died so, as quietly as he had slept. His little pale meek face looked as if, as he said, he was glad to go.

"Nothing but a degree of force that no one would use could have moved Long-Ears from the body of his master, till it was laid in the grave. Then, with some difficulty, Mrs. Meadow gained possession of him and brought him home."

THE STORY OF THE FARTHING

CHAPTER III

THE STORY OF THE FARTHING

"NOW, farthing," said Carl, "it is your turn. So make haste."

"Turn me over then," said the farthing, "for I can't talk with my back to people."

So Carl turned him over, and there he lay and stared at the ceiling.

"The first thing I remember," began the farthing, slowly, "was being put by an old gentleman into a leather purse. I was very bright, for I had just come from the Mint. The leather purse in which I lay had an end for gold and silver and another for copper. With my usual love of bright company, when the old gentleman slipped me in amongst a number of dingy pennies I slipped out again and ran in among the gold.

"The old gentleman walked leisurely home,

and when he rang his own door bell it was already quite dark. A dear little girl opened the door, dressed in a white frock and black apron.

" 'Oh, grandpa,' she said, 'I 'm so glad you 've come, because there 's a little boy been waiting here ever so long for ten shillings.'

" 'Well, my dear,' said the old gentleman, 'ten shillings is worth waiting for.'

" 'But he 's in a great hurry to get home before dark, because he says the children have got no bread for supper till he buys it,' said the little girl. 'He brought a pair of boots for you, grandpa. His father's very poor, he says.'

" 'Is he?' said the old gentleman; 'then I 'm afraid my boots won't be worth much. However, Nanny, my dear, you may take him the money for 'em, since they 're here.'

" 'Shall I fetch you a light, grandpa,' said the child. 'It's too dark to see.'

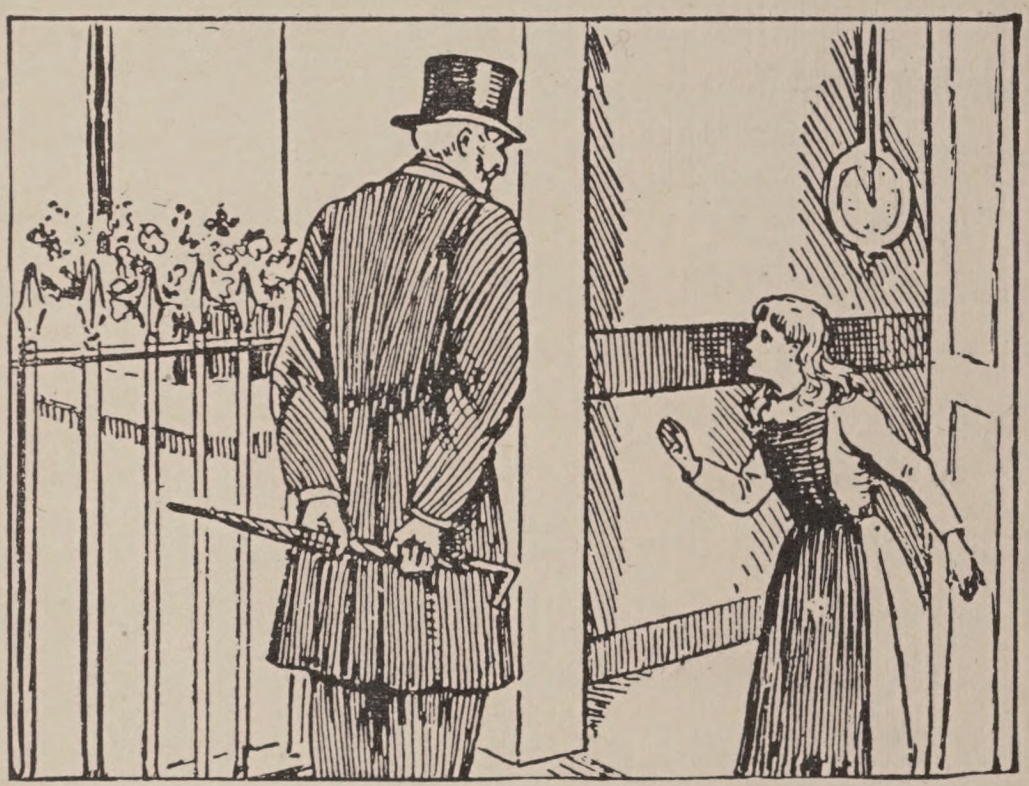
" 'No, no—not a bit of it—I know how half-a-sovereign feels, well enough. He shall have a gold piece—for the first time in his life, I 'll warrant.'

"And opening the most precious end of his

THE OLD GENTLEMAN SLIPS THE BRIGHT FATHING INTO HIS PURSE.

purse, the old gentleman's unerring thumb and finger drew forth me, and laid me in the little girl's open palm. The soft little hand closed upon me, and down she ran to the lower entry.

" 'There,' she said, 'here it is. Grandpa says



"'OH, GRANDPA, I 'AM SO GLAD YOU 'VE COME."

he guesses that 's the first gold piece you ever had. Have you got a great many little brothers and sisters?'

" 'This ain 't gold,' said the boy, too busy ex-

L. of C.

amining me to heed her last question. 'He 's made a mistake, this is only a farthing.'

" 'Oh, well, I 'll take it back to him then,' said the little messenger. 'I s'pose he could n't see in the dark.' And away she ran.

"The old gentleman by this time was enjoying his slippers and the newspaper, between a blazing fire and two long candles in tall silver candlesticks.

" 'Grandpa,' said the child, laying her hand on his knee, 'do you know what you did in the dark? you gave that boy a farthing instead of a gold piece—wasn't it funny?'

" 'Hey! what?' said the old gentleman, moving his paper far enough to one side to see the little speaker. 'Gave him a farthing instead of a gold piece? nonsense!'

" 'But you did, grandpa,' urged the child.

" 'Only look at it, grandpa; see—it's only a farthing.'

" 'I don't want to look at it,' said he, putting away her hand. 'All stuff, my dear—it was as good a piece of gold as ever came out of the Mint. Don't I know the feel of one? and did n't I take

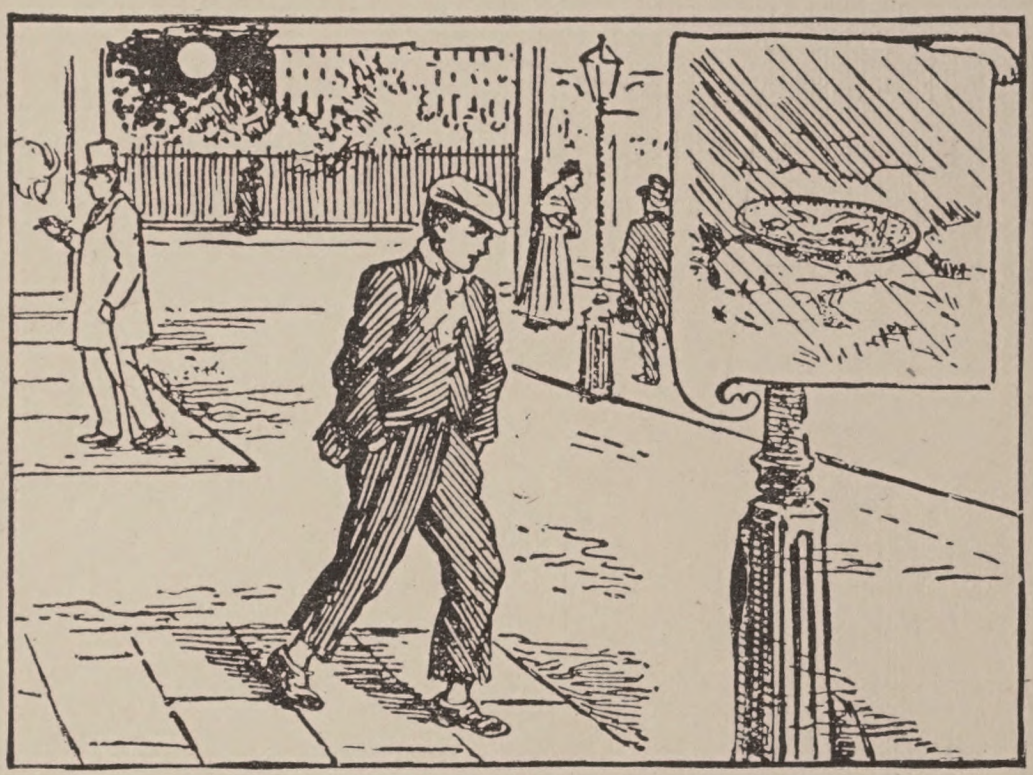
THE BOOT-MAKER'S BOY SAYS A MISTAKE HAS BEEN MADE.

7—The Christmas Stocking.

it out of the gold end of my purse, where I never put copper? Bad boy, no doubt—you must n't go back to him. Here, William—'

"'But he looked good, grandpa,' said the child, 'and so sorry.'

"'He 'll look sorry now, I 'll be bound,' said



"PRESENTLY HE WALKED AWAY."

the old man. 'I say, William!—take this farthing back to that boy, and tell him to be off with it, and not to show his face here again.'

"The command was strictly obeyed; and my new owner, after a vain attempt to move the

waiter, carried me into the street and sat down on the next door-step.

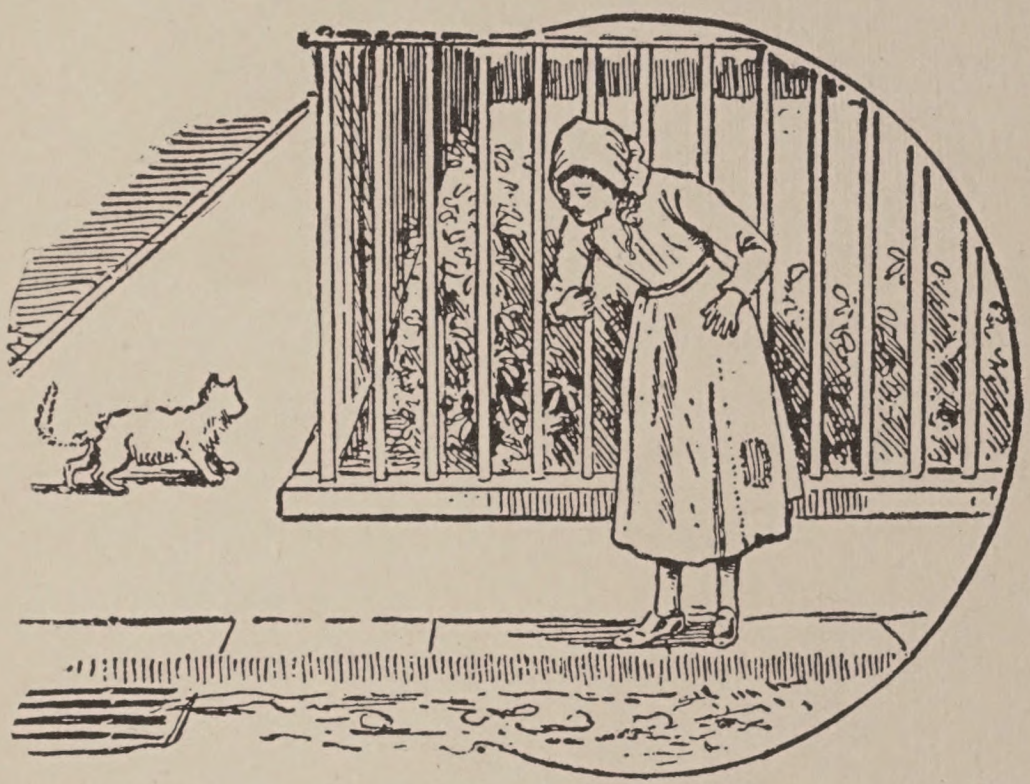
"At length he seemed to comprehend his loss; for, dropping me on the pavement, he sank his head on his hands, and the hot tears fell fast down from his face upon mine. Then, in a sudden passion of grief and excitement, he caught me up and threw me from him as far as he could; and I, who had been too proud to associate with coppers, now fell to the very bottom of a heap of mud. As I lay there half smothered, I could hear the steps of the boy, who, soon repenting of his rashness, now sought me—inasmuch as I was better than nothing; but he sought in vain. Presently he walked away.

"I am not good at reckoning time," said the farthing, "but I should think I might have lain there about a week—the mud heap having in the meantime changed to one of dust; when a furious shower arose one afternoon, or I should rather say came down; and not only were dust and mud swept away, but the rain even washed my face for me, and left me, almost as bright as ever, high and dry upon a clean paving-stone.

THE OLD GENTLEMAN REFUSES TO EVEN LOOK AT THE COIN.

"As I lay there I suddenly felt myself picked up by a most careful little finger and thumb, which had no desire to get wet or muddy. They belonged to a little girl about ten years old.

" 'You pretty farthing!' she said admiringly;



"'YOU PRETTY FARTHING,' SHE SAID."

"how bright and nice you do look! and how funny it is that I should find you—I never found anything before. I wonder how you came here —I hope some poor child didn't lose you."

"While she thus expressed her opinion I was

busy making up mine, and truly it was a pleasant one. Her hair was brushed quite smooth, only when she stopped to pick me up one lock had fallen down from under the sun-bonnet; and her face was as simple and good as it could be. But I saw that her cheeks were thin, and they might have been pale but for the pink sun-bonnet.

"Suddenly she exclaimed:

" 'Now I can get it!—Oh, I 'm so glad! Come, little farthing, I must give you away, though I should like to keep you very much, for you 're very pretty; but you are all the money I 've got in the world.''

"Now for the candy-store," thought I, as she turned and began to walk away as fast as she could. She tripped along, till we came to a large grocery. There she went in.

" 'Please, sir, to let me have a farthing's worth of tea,' she said timidly, showing me, and giving me a kind glance at the same time; "it 's only a farthing, but it will get enough for mother, and she 's sick and wanted some tea so much.'

"The young man, taking down a canister, measured out two or three good pinches of tea

THE LITTLE GIRL BUYS TEA FOR HER SICK MOTHER WITH THE FARTHING.

into a brown paper and folded it up. The child took it with a very glad face, laying me down on the counter with a joyful 'Thank you, sir!' which I by no means repeated—I wanted to go home with her and see that tea made. But we farth-

"HE GAVE THE STARCH TO THE COOK."

ings can never know the good that our purchases do in the world.

"The clerk took me up and balanced me upon his finger, as if he had half a mind to give the child back her money, and pay the sum of one

farthing into the store out of his own private purse. But habit prevailed, and he dropped me into the till.

"We were a dull company in the till that night, for most of the money was old; and it is a well-known fact that worn-down coins are not communicative. In this inactive kind of life some time passed away, and though some of us were occasionally taken to market, yet we never bought anything. But one evening a man came into the grocery and asked for starch, and we hoped for bright visitors; but I had no time to enjoy them, for I was sent to make change. The messenger was a manservant, and with the starch in his hand and me in his pocket he soon left the store and went whistling along the street. I was glad when he reached home, and ran down the area steps and into the kitchen. He gave the starch to the cook, and she carried the change into the parlor. But what was my surprise to find that I was in the very same house whence I had gone forth as a piece of gold!

"The old gentleman was asleep in his chair now, and a pretty-looking lady sat by, reading,

NANNY ASKS HER MOTHER FOR THE FARTHING.

while the little girl was playing with her doll on the rug. She jumped up and came to the table, and began to count the change.

"'Two-and-sixpence, mamma—see, here's a shilling and two sixpences and five-pence and a farthing—mamma, may I have this farthing?'

"'It is n't mine, Nanny—your grandfather gave James the money.'

"'Well, but you can pay him again,' said the child; 'and, besides, he 'd let me have it, I know.'

"'What will you do with it, Nanny?'

"'Oh, I don't know, mamma—I 'll see if grandpa will let me have it.'

"'Let you have what?' said the old gentleman, waking up.

"'This farthing, grandpa.'

"'To be sure you may have it! Of course!—and fifty more.'

"'No, she must have but one,' said the lady, with a smile.

"Nanny thanked her mother, and, holding me fast in one hand, she sat down on the rug again by her doll. The old gentleman seemed very much amused.

"From that time, whenever little Nanny went to walk I went too; and she really seemed to be quite fond of me, for though she often stopped before the candy stores or the toy shops, and once or twice went in to look at some beads, yet she always carried me home again.

" 'Mamma, I don't know how to spend my farthing,' she said one day.

" 'Are you tired of taking care of it, Nanny?'

" 'No, mamma, but I want to spend it.'

" 'Why?'

" 'Why, mamma—I don't know—money's meant to spend, is n't it?'

" 'Yes, it is meant to spend—not to throw away.'

" 'Oh, no,' said Nanny; 'I would n't throw away my farthing for anything. It 's a very pretty farthing.

" 'I won't get my beads then,' added Nanny, with a little sigh.

" 'That would not be waste,' said her mother, kissing her. 'It is right to spend some of our money for harmless pleasure, and we will go and buy the beads this very afternoon.'

"So after dinner they set forth.

"It was a very cold day, but Nanny and her mother were well wrapped up, so they did not feel it much. I was just wondering to myself

"'SHE HAD NOT EVEN A SHAWL.'"

what kind of a person the bead-woman would prove to be, when I heard Nanny say:

"'Mamma, did you see that little girl on those brown steps? She had no tippet, mamma, and not even a shawl, and her feet were all tucked up

in her petticoat; and'—Nanny's voice faltered—'I think she was crying. I did n't look at her much, for it made me feel bad, but I thought so.'

"'Yes, love,' said her mother, 'I saw her. How good God has been to me, that it is not my little daughter who is sitting there.'

"Nanny walked on in silence for some time, then she spoke again.

"'Mamma, I 'm afraid a great many poor children want things more than I want my beads.'

"'I 'm afraid they do, Nanny.'

"'Mamma, will you please go back with me and let me give that little girl my farthing? Would n't she be pleased, mamma? Would she know how to spend it?'

"'Suppose you spend it for her, Nanny. People that are cold are often hungry, too. Shall we go to the baker's and buy her something to eat?'"

"'Oh, yes,' said Nanny. 'Will you buy it, mamma, or shall I?'

"'You, darling.'

"'And when they reached the shop, Nanny

NANNY AND HER MOTHER REACH THE BAKER'S SHOP.

looked round once more at her mother, and opening the shop door with a very pleased and excited little face, she marched up to the counter.

"'If you please, sir,' she said, laying me

"'WHAT WILL YOU HAVE, MY DEAR?'"

down on the counter, 'I want something for a very poor little girl. She 's sitting out in the street all alone.' And Nanny's lips were trembling at the remembrance. Her mother's eyes were full, too.

"'What will you have, my dear?' said the baker.

"Nanny looked up at her mother.

"'What would you like if you were hungry?' replied her mother.

"'Oh, I should like some bread,' said Nanny. 'and I guess the little girl would, too. But all those loaves are too big.'

"'How would these do,' said the baker, taking some rolls out of a drawer.

"'Oh, they 're just the thing!' said Nanny, 'and I like rolls so much. May I take one, sir? and is a farthing enough to pay for it?'

"The baker gave a queer little shake of his head, and searching below the counter for a bit of wrapping-paper, he laid the two largest rolls upon it.

"'A farthing is enough to pay for two.' he said. 'Shall I tie them up for you?'

"'No, thank you, sir; you need n't tie it—if you 'll only wrap them up a little.'

"The baker went right into the back room," continued the farthing, "to tell the story to his wife, and I was left to my own reflections on the

counter; but I had reason to be well satisfied, for it was certainly the largest farthing's worth I had ever bought in my life. But while I lay there thinking about it, a boy came into the shop, and, seeing me, he caught me up and ran

"THE BAKER'S BOY WAS SWEEPING THE FLOOR."

out again. At least, he was running out, when he tripped and fell, and, as I am noted for slipping through people's fingers, I slipped through his, and rolled to the farthest corner of the shop. There I lay all night, and in the morn-

ing when the baker's boy was sweeping the floor, he found me and put me in the till, for he was honest. But just then Mr. Krinken came in with a string of fish, and the careless creature gave me with some other change for a parcel of miserable flounders. That 's the way I came here."

"I 'll take good care of you, farthing," said Carl, as he put it back into the purse, "and I won't spend you till I want to."

THE STORY OF THE CORK BOAT

CHAPTER IV

THE STORY OF THE CORK BOAT.

"NOW, my pretty little boat," said Carl the next day, "you shall tell me your story."

Carl had been lying flat on his back on the floor, holding the boat at arm's length over his head, looking at it and turning it about; now, he placed it on the old chest which held his other treasures, and waited for the boat to speak.

"I can't tell a story," said the boat.

"Can't tell a story!—yes you can," said Carl. "Do it, right off."

"I have n't any to tell," said the boat. "I was once of some use in the world, but now I 'm of none, except to be looked at."

"Yes, you are of use," said Carl, "for I like you; and you can tell a story, too, if you 're a mind, as well as the purse."

"The purse has had a better experience," said

the boat, "and has kept good society. For me, I have always lived on the outside of things, ever since I can remember, and never knew what was going on in the world, any more than I knew what was going on inside of my old tree. All I knew was that I carried up sap for its branches —when it came down again, or what became of it, I never saw."

"Where were you then?" said Carl.

"On the outside of a great evergreen oak, in a forest of Valencia. I was a piece of its bark. I wish I was there now. But the outer bark of those trees gets dead after a while—and then the country people come and cut it off and sell it out of the land."

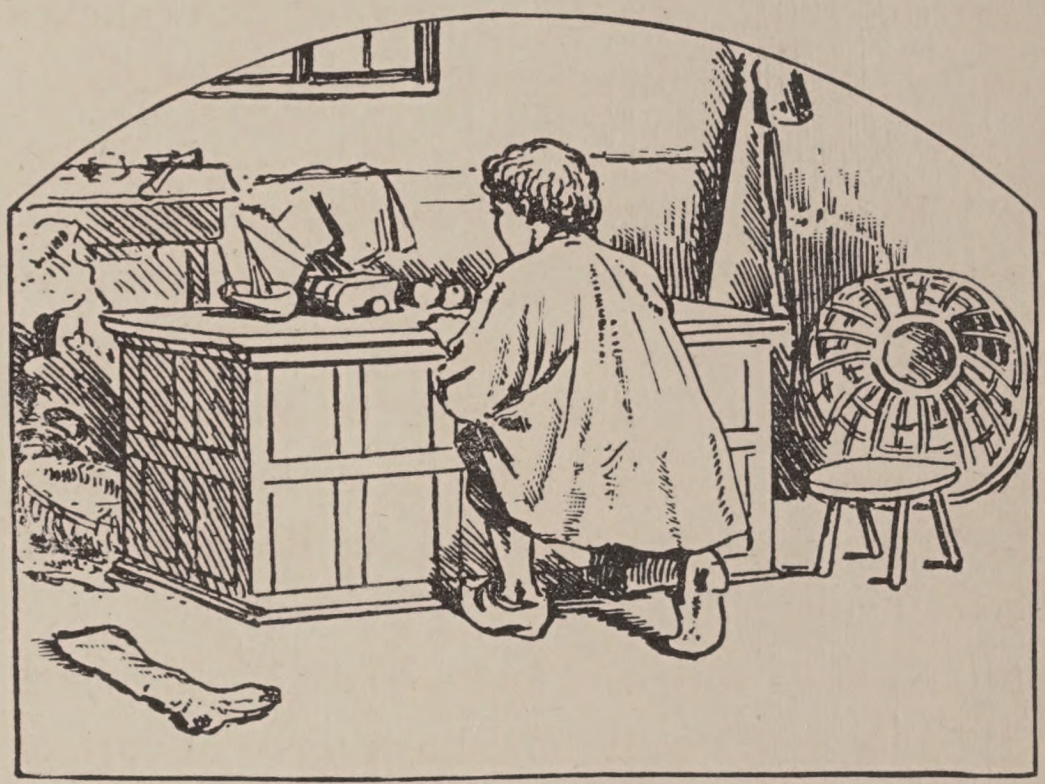
"And were you dead and sold off?" said Carl.

"To be sure I was. As fine a piece of cork as ever grew. I had been growing nine years, since the tree was cut before."

"Well but tell me your story!" said Carl.

"I tell you," said the little boat, "I have n't any story. There was nothing to be seen in the forest but the great shades of the kingly oaks, and the birds that reveled in the solitude of

their thick branches, and the martens, and such like. It was fine there, though. The north wind never troubled me. The snow never lay on the glossy leaves of my parent oak. Nobody came near us, unless a stray



"CARL PLACED THE BOAT ON THE OLD CHEST."

peasant now and then passed through. And when I was cut down, I was packed up and shipped off to England, and shifted from hand to hand, till John Krinken took it into his head years ago to make a sort of cork jacket of me,

with one or two of my companions; and I have been tumbling about in his possession ever since. He has done for me now. I am prettier than I ever was before, but I shall never be of any use again. I shall try the water, I suppose, again a few times for your pleasure, and then probably I shall try the fire, for the same."

"The fire! No indeed," said Carl, "I 'm not going to burn you up. I am going to see you sail this minute, since you won't do anything else."

And Carl sprang up and went forthwith to the beach to find a quiet bit of shallow water in some nook where it would be safe to float his cork boat. But the waves were beating pretty high that day, and the tide was coming in, and altogether there was too much commotion on the beach to suit the little "Santa Claus," as he had named her. So Carl discontentedly came back, and set up the little boat to dry.

"Some day," said Carl to himself, "I am going to ask the apples, the shoes, the pine cone, the book, and you, old gray stocking, to tell me your stories."

ALTEMUS' GOOD TIMES SERIES

Handsomely printed, profusely illustrated and attractively bound.
Cloth, illuminated covers (5½ x 7¾ inches) 50 cents each.

UNDER THE STARS

By FLORENCE MORSE KINGSLEY

Four beautiful stories from the life of Jesus.

A Watch in the Night.
The Child in Jerusalem.
The Only Son of His Mother.
The Children's Bread.

THE STORY OF THE ROBINS

By SARAH TRIMMER

"The Story of the Robins" was first published in England under the title of "Fabulous Histories," in 1785, and acquired instant popularity. It has been issued in all sizes and styles; it has received nothing but praise from the greatest of critics; and it has been illustrated by the best artists. It compares favorably with modern works which teach kindness to animals.

JACKANAPES

By JULIANA H. EWING

In the story of "Jackanapes," the Captain's child, with his clear blue eyes and mop of yellow curls, is the one important figure. The doting aunt, the faithful Tony, the irascible General, the postman, the boy-trumpeter, the silent Major, and the ever-dear Lollo, are there, it is true, but they group around the hero in subordinate positions. In all they say and do and feel they conspire to reflect the glory and beauty of the noble, generous, tender-spirited "Jackanapes."

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

By ELIZABETH WETHERELL

This story of the Christmas Stocking has helped to make many children happy, for without it many fathers and mothers would have never thought of making arrangements for the visit of Santa Claus, who never comes where he is not made welcome. The things little Carl found in his stocking told him stories which should help us into the habit of remembering those who have not all the good things we possess.

LADDIE

By the Author of "Miss Toosey's Mission"

A charming story that has been popular for many years, and deservedly so.

MAKING A START

By TUDOR JENKS.

A story of a bright boy who did not wait for "something to turn up," but exercised his talent for drawing until he secured a good position on a great daily newspaper. A book for boys who are learning that "the secret of success is constancy to purpose."

HENRY ALTEMUS COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA

ALTEMUS' GOOD TIMES SERIES

Handsomely printed, profusely illustrated and attractively bound.
Cloth, illuminated covers (5½ x 7¾ inches) 50 cents each.

THE STORY OF A DONKEY

By Mme. La Comtesse de Ségur.

In this book the donkey tells the story of his life and adventure, because, as he says, "I want you to treat all of us donkeys kindly, and to remember that we are often much more sensible than some human beings." The story has always been exceedingly popular and has delighted thousands of readers.

MISS TOOSEY'S MISSION

By the Author of "Laddie."

A delightful and wholesome story that has had a wide circulation and still holds its popularity.

A BLUE GRASS BEAUTY

By Gabrielle E. Jackson.

Never did Kentucky turn out a handsomer creature than the Blue Grass Beauty who twice carried off the Blue Ribbon at New York's great annual horse show. With the story of his life is woven that of some very nice people, and all is set forth in Mrs. Jackson's inimitable manner. It is far too good a book to mislay.

THE STORY OF A SHORT LIFE

By Juliana H. Ewing.

In "The Story of a Short Life," Mrs. Ewing again sings the praises of military life and courtesies. Many people admire Leonard's story as much as "Jackanapes," possibly because the circumstances of the former's life are much more within the range of common experiences than those of the latter. It is a simple, exquisitely tender little story.

JESSICA'S FIRST PRAYER

By Hesba Stretton.

A beautiful and pathetic story which appeals to all children, and to older readers as well.

THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN

By Rudolph Erich Raspe.

In 1737 Baron Munchausen served in Russian campaigns against the Turks, and after his return acquired great notoriety by his exaggerated stories of adventure. These stories are so outrageous, and Munchausen asserts so strongly that they are all strictly true, that his name has become proverbial as a synonym for extravagant boasting.

HENRY ALTEMUS COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA

OCT 13 1903

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
00025650013